

AI: Public Service of What's Possible
Fall 2026



Class Meetings:

Tuesdays 6pm-9pm: Oct 20, Nov 17

Saturdays & Sundays 9am-4pm: Oct 24-25 and Nov 7-8

Location: Online, Zoom & Canvas

Faculty: Amy Gould, Ph.D.

E-mail: goulda@evergreen.edu

Master of Public Administration Program

MPA Mission Statement: Our students, faculty and staff create learning communities to explore and implement socially just, democratic public service. We *think* critically and creatively; *communicate* effectively; *work* collaboratively; *embrace* diversity; we *value* fairness and equity; *advocate* powerfully on behalf of the public; and *imagine* new possibilities to accomplish positive change in our workplaces and in our communities. "Be the Change."

Course Description: Reconciliation of public administration is ongoing. By learning about our public service collision with Artificial Intelligence (AI), we can collectively affirm possible ethical and equitable futures for public policy, public administration, and AI together. Our course work requires public servants to respect the distinctly unique ways AI occurs across governing. Our learning is often linked to what we think we know as either artificial or human. Class discussions and seminar papers emphasize the ways our knowledge is the product of the best available data. Without reconciling the human limitations of the technology we created, AI might reproduce the biases of normative public administration "as it is" rather than what's possible. To this end, students will learn about how AI could set the boundaries for what is legitimate knowledge and who is valued in the public.

Key Questions and Learning Objectives:

- 1) Why is AI important for public service?
- 2) What does public administration need to learn about what's possible with AI?
- 3) How can we assess the benefits and risks of AI?
- 4) What are the unknowns of AI in public service?

***Fair Warning*:** This course is offered in an intensive format. This means the pace is "intense" with 4 weeks of content delivered each scheduled course weekend. The class will also require a large amount of self-directed learning outside of class time through readings, assignments, group work, recorded presentations, asynchronous participation and discussion posts.

Required Books:

Erbert, A. (2025). *How Minds Are Made: Understanding Artificial Intelligence from the Inside Out*. Supercritical Books. ISBN: 978-1968988111

Fagan, M. & Gillies, B. (2025). *Governing With AI: How the Public Sector Can Use Artificial Intelligence to Improve Performance*. Bloomsbury Academic. ISBN: 979-8216369318

Vonnegut, K. (1999). *Player Piano*. The Dial Press. ISBN: 978-0385333788

Required Readings 1st Class, Tuesday October 20

What is AI (according to Google) <https://cloud.google.com/learn/what-is-artificial-intelligence>

[15 U.S. Code § 9401](#) defines AI with notes in [10 U.S. Code § 2358](#) . See: [https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/artificial_intelligence_\(ai\)](https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/artificial_intelligence_(ai))

WA Artificial Intelligence Task Force <https://www.atg.wa.gov/aitaskforce> Read the Final Report posted to this site after July 1, 2026. Also, read the literature review from Dec. 2025 as required by ESSB 5838 “[Artificial Intelligence: Risks and Opportunities Report Produced for the Washington State Attorney General's Office by The Raben Group](#)”

Eikenberry, A. (Nov/Dec 2009). [The Present and \(Normative\) Future of Public Administration](#). *Public Administration Review*, 1060 – 1067.

Gounari, P. (2008). Chapter 5, [Unlearning the Official History: Agency and Pedagogies of Possibility](#), sourced from *Counterpoints*, v. 319, 97-114. As a reprint from Bartolome, L. (ed.) (2007). *Ideologies in Education: Unmasking the Trap of Teacher Neutrality*. Peter Lang AG, International Academic Publishers.

Optional Additional Readings: Choose your own adventure! Students: use this list of readings for your seminar papers #2, 3, 4 and to build your knowledge base as needed.

WA Tech [LESSONS & RECOMMENDATIONS](#): Responsible AI in the Public Sector, How the Washington State Government Uses & Governs Artificial Intelligence

WA Tech Generative AI Report https://watech.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2024-10/WA_State_GenAIReport_FINAL.pdf

AI <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/mckinsey-explainers/what-is-ai>
Shadow AI <https://www.wiz.io/academy/shadow-ai>

The Devil is in the Training Data <https://blog.genlaw.org/explainers/training-data.html#image-generation>

Government AI Coalition <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/information-technology/ai-reviews-algorithm-register/govai-coalition>

Artificial Intelligence in the States: Harnessing the Power of AI in the Public Sector
<https://www.csg.org/2023/12/05/artificial-intelligence-in-the-public-sector-how-are-states-harnessing-the-power-of-ai/>

AI Guide for the U.S. Federal Government <https://coe.gsa.gov/coe/ai-guide-for-government/tools-capabilities-services/>

G7 Toolkit for Artificial Intelligence in the Public Sector
https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/g7-toolkit-for-artificial-intelligence-in-the-public-sector_421c1244-en.html

Partnership for Public Service: Insights on the use of AI across government
<https://ourpublicservice.org/blog/insights-on-the-use-of-ai-across-government/>

Concerns for AI in the Public Sector
<https://www.centralsquare.com/resources/articles/concerns-for-ai-in-the-public-sector>

Department of Homeland Security Generative AI Public Sector Playbook
<https://www.dhs.gov/publication/dhs-generative-ai-public-sector-playbook>

Deloitte AI Institute, Top uses for AI in government and public services
<https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/us/Documents/deloitte-analytics/us-ai-institute-goverment-public-services-dossier.pdf>

The Alan Turing Institute, AI for Public Services
<https://www.turing.ac.uk/research/research-programmes/public-policy/public-policy-themes/ai-public-services>

Observatory of Public Sector Innovation <https://oecd-opsi.org/work-areas/ai/>

Real AI Solutions Helping People Now <https://news.asu.edu/20250303-science-and-technology-real-ai-solutions-helping-people-now>

Tribes and AI: Possibilities for Tribal Sovereignty, download full article
<https://scholarship.law.duke.edu/dltr/vol25/iss1/1/>

AI and Indigenous Peoples' Realities
<https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/artificial-intelligence-and-indigenous-peoples-realities>

Liminality in the Digital Era: Navigating Thresholds and Embracing Change
https://medium.com/@sabine_vdl/liminality-in-the-digital-era-navigating-thresholds-and-

[embracing-change-103b9e623489](#) and Liminal Space: The Threshold of Transformation
<https://kennethreitz.org/artificial-intelligence/art/liminal-space> and Automating Liminality
 in Foresight Practice <https://ifsdigital.org/2025-2/vol-29-no-4-june-2025/automating-liminality-in-foresight-practice/>

Samanta, A. (2018). [Exploring the “In-Between” Place: Dialogue, Hermeneutics, and Transformation in Governance](#), *Administrative Theory & Praxis*, 40, 227–249.

Raadschelders, J. (Dec, 2005). [Government and Public Administration: Challenges to and Need for Connecting Knowledge](#), *Administrative Theory & Praxis*, 27(4), 602-627.

Fall 2026 Schedule (faculty may alter schedule)

Tuesday October 20

Time	Activity	Deliverable
6:00pm	Introductions & Course Protocols	
6:30pm	Lecture: Intersections of norms, PA, policy, reconciliation, and AI?	
7:15pm	BREAK	
7:30pm	Seminar	<u>Assignment #1</u> Seminar paper <u>Readings:</u> *See list of required readings
8:45pm	Overview of upcoming class meetings and assignments	
9:00pm	End	

Saturday October 24

Time	Activity	Deliverable
9:00am	Overview of course expectations with guest speakers Discussion: AI in the news	
9:30am	Guest speakers TBA	
10:30am	BREAK	
10:45am	Guest speakers TBA	
12:00pm	LUNCH	
1:00pm	Seminar	<u>Assignment #2:</u> Seminar paper <u>Readings:</u> Fagan & Gillies, <i>Governing With AI</i>
2:00pm	BREAK	
2:15pm	Lecture: Intelligence Workshop: using AI in PA for mind maps Gitmind.com	
4:00pm	End	

Sunday October 25

Time	Activity	Deliverable
9:00am	Lecture/discussion: Ethics of Governing with AI	
10:15am	BREAK	
10:30am	Guest Speakers TBA	
12:00pm	LUNCH	
1:00pm	Seminar	Readings: Fagan & Gillies, <i>Governing With AI</i>
2:15 -4	Workshop: Using AI in PA, “training” ChatGPT for policy solutions https://openai.com/ and compare to Claude.ai Workshop: Using AI in PA for decisions https://rationale.jina.ai/ SWOT narrative https://www.getvoila.ai/ai-tools/swot-analysis-generator SWOT image https://www.edrawmax.com/app/ai-swot-analysis/	

Saturday November 7

Time	Activity	Deliverable
9:00am	Welcome and overview	
10:30am	Guest speakers TBA	
12:00pm	LUNCH	
1:00pm	Guest speakers TBA	
2:15pm	BREAK	
2:30pm	Seminar: “Engineers vs. Public Administrators vs. the Public”	Assignment #3: Seminar paper Reading: Vonnegut, <i>Player Piano</i>
3:15pm	Overview of Assig #5, Form teams and start on Assig #5	
4:00pm		

Sunday November 8

Activity	Deliverable
Asynchronous class: Review podcast. Post your responses to the main points discussed by the author and offer questions you would want to ask him by 4:00pm : https://youtu.be/_jl64f-821o?feature=shared Review lecture and post responses by 4:00pm : “Thankfully, humans can intelligently forget”	<u>Assign #4:</u> Seminar paper due by 9:00am <u>Reading:</u> Erbert, <i>How Minds Are Made</i>
Team time	

Tuesday November 17

Activity	Deliverable
Asynchronous class: Pre-recorded Final Presentations with discussion post replies by 9:00pm	<u>Assignment #5:</u> Pre-recorded team presentation with visual aid about AI and the Public Service of What’s Possible due by 6:00pm

Evaluations: Student’s self-eval and student’s eval of faculty required for credit. We will not hold evaluation conferences.

Assignments**Assignment #1: Seminar Paper**

Due: October 20 posted to canvas by 6:00pm

Length: 3 - 5 pages. APA essay format.

Compare and contrast the assigned required readings for Tuesday Oct 20. Write a seminar paper in response to the following key questions and learning objectives:

- 1) Why is AI important for public service?
- 2) What does public administration need to learn about what’s possible with AI?
- 3) How can we assess the benefits and risks of AI?
- 4) What are the unknowns of AI in public service?

Assignment #2: Seminar Paper

Due: October 24 posted to canvas by 9:00am

Length: 3 - 5 pages. APA essay format. Pick two of the readings from the “optional additional readings” list and compare/contrast them with the Fagan & Gillies textbook, *Governing With AI*. Write a seminar paper in response to the following key questions and learning objectives:

- 1) Why is AI important for public service?
- 2) What does public administration need to learn about what’s possible with AI?
- 3) How can we assess the benefits and risks of AI?
- 4) What are the unknowns of AI in public service?

Assignment # 3: Seminar Paper

Due: November 7 posted to canvas by 9:00am

Length: 3 - 5 pages. APA essay format.

Pick two of the readings from the "optional additional readings" list and compare/contrast them with the Vonnegut book, *Player Piano*. Write a seminar paper in response to the following key questions and learning objectives:

- 1) Why is AI important for public service?
- 2) What does public administration need to learn about what's possible with AI?
- 3) How can we assess the benefits and risks of AI?
- 4) What are the unknowns of AI in public service?

Assignment #4: Seminar Paper

Due: November 8 posted on canvas by 9:00am.

Length: 3 - 5 pages. APA essay format.

Pick two of the readings from the "optional additional readings" list and compare/contrast them with the Erbert book, *How Minds Are Made*. Write a seminar paper in response to the following key questions and learning objectives:

- 1) Why is AI important for public service?
- 2) What does public administration need to learn about what's possible with AI?
- 3) How can we assess the benefits and risks of AI?
- 4) What are the unknowns of AI in public service?

Assignment #5: Visual Aid, Recorded Presentation, and Discussion Posts (group assignment)

Due: November 17 posted to canvas by 6:00pm. The presentation will be **pre-recorded**. This assignment will be explained in detail during class with examples.

- Form groups of no more than 3 people. Using an online recording tool with speaker and screen share recording capability (Ex. Teams or Loom), your group will record a presentation about what you believe is the key knowledge, skill, or ability all public servants should have about AI. What is the essential [blank]? Why is it so important?
- The presentation should be applied and incorporate the readings from the class.
- Recorded presentation should not exceed 10 minutes total.
- Have one person from the group upload the recorded presentation to Canvas on behalf of the group. If using Teams or Loom it can be uploaded as a link. If using Zoom, upload as a Mp4 file.
- **Discussion posts:** view all of the recorded presentations. Then post thoughtful questions about each. Also, note how you might use the lessons presented in your current or future job.

A visual aid is required for the presentation. Consider using one or more of these [presentation tools](#).

All presentations should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Any photographs or graphs/charts should have a summary notes

about what is being displayed.

- All photographs or graphs/charts should be cited with their source.
- Accessibility: contrast (dark background, light font), limit red and green (color blindness), font size, readability, universal design accessibility.
<https://doit.uw.edu/brief/tips-for-delivering-an-accessible-presentation/>
- If using a video to show during the presentation, it may not take up more than half the presentation time.
- All members of the group are expected to participate in the presentation as able.

Course Policies, Commitments, and Responsibilities

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI): Discuss how you plan to use AI with faculty as there are many types of AI with multiple ethical considerations. AI is also experimental and is often inaccurate. If you use an AI tool in your assignments, cite it as per APA guidance:

<https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/resources/publishing-tips/policy-generative-ai>

Trauma-Informed Principles Commitment: While faculty and students experience traumatic events throughout their lives, the global pandemic and endemic racism have created ongoing, overarching traumatic events, heightened by each person's individual experiences. The result can be ["a cognitive burden comparable to a full-time job."](#) The faculty are committed to recognizing trauma and resisting re-traumatization by integrating [Trauma Informed Teaching & Learning Principles](#) throughout the course. Specifically, we seek to create an atmosphere that is respectful, transparent and trustworthy by making expectations clear and communicating with the goal of building learning community trust and understanding to foster student choice by, when possible, offering options for engagement, readings, and communication; and lastly, to empower student voice by responding to the various forms of privilege and oppression silencing and limiting decision-making in learning communities.

Mandatory Reporter: The Evergreen State College is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students that is free of all forms of discrimination and harassment, including sexual assault, domestic/relationship violence, sexual harassment, stalking, and retaliation. We are committed to your well-being and safety, and we're open to discuss any concerns you may have.

Please know that we are Responsible Employees, meaning that we are legally obligated to share information with the College's Title IX Coordinator in certain situations that help ensure a student's safety and care is being addressed. Although we have to notify the Title IX Coordinator, it will be up to you to control how your case is handled, including whether to pursue a formal complaint or legal action or not. The goal is to make sure you are aware of a range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need.

If you are seeking confidential support, please feel free to contact the following confidential resources: Office of Sexual Violence Prevention and Response (Sem I, 4119, 360.867.5221,

jonese@evergreen.edu), Student Wellness Services (Sem I 2110, 360.867.6200), or SafePlace Olympia (521 Legion Way SE, Olympia, 360.754.6300)

Reasonable Accommodations will be provided for any student who qualifies for them through a working relationship with Access Services. If any student has a health condition or disability that may require accommodations in order to effectively participate in this class, please request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the office of [Access Services](#) for Students with Disabilities (867-6348 or 6364) to receive a letter of accommodation. If the student is already working with the office of Access Services the faculty should have received a letter clearly indicating the student has a disability that requires academic accommodations. Information about a disability or health condition will be regarded as confidential.

Participation & Attendance: Classes are offered online. Students are required to attend each class meeting in its entirety. Participation includes focusing on class content, contributing in class and seminar, listening to others, taking notes, completing class interactive exercises, avoiding distractions, and listening to and dialoging with the guest speakers. If an absence is unavoidable, faculty should be notified prior to a class and/or seminar absence.

After one absence per quarter (= 3 hours accumulated is one absence), make-up work will be assigned by faculty. Makeup work must be completed by the end of the last scheduled class meeting to receive course credit. After 9 hours of absences total in one quarter, you may be denied full credit for the course. Also, after reoccurring absences (e.g., being late to class; regularly missing an hour of class), you may be denied full credit. Finally, if you do miss a class, you are expected to do the reading for the class meeting missed, turn in any assignments that were due on the class date missed, and review class notes and materials available on Canvas.

Late Assignments: Turning in assignments late is unacceptable. If there is an unavoidable need to turn in an assignment late, the student should contact their faculty no later than the original assignment's due date to discuss options. Late assignments must be completed by the revised due date to ensure full receipt of course credit. Late assignments may or may not receive feedback.

Credit: Students will receive 4 graduate credits if all course requirements have been satisfactorily completed. Students will be evaluated based upon their progress towards the learning objectives, assessed from classroom, seminar, and assignment performance. Partial or full loss of credit decisions will be made by the faculty. Full loss of credit for two terms of core may result in dismissal from the MPA program. Failing to meet course requirements (e.g., not completing one or more assignments, completing one or more assignments late, or multiple absences) may constitute denial of total credit at the discretion of the faculty. Students at risk of losing credit will receive written notification prior to the end of the quarter.

Human Subjects Review (HSR): Students may NOT conduct primary data collection without HSR approval by faculty. There may also be requirements regarding research protocols with

governments (Tribes/Feds/state/local), Native communities, private organizations or nonprofits. For more information see the [Institutional Review Board Student Guide](#).

Plagiarism: (i.e., using other peoples' work as your own) may result in total loss of credit for the class and may result in dismissal from the MPA program. See the [MPA Handbook](#), for the MPA Academic Honesty policy and additional information. Academic Honesty at TESC: "Plagiarism is defined as representing the works or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. It includes, but is not limited to, copying materials directly, failure to cite sources of arguments and data, and failure to explicitly acknowledge joint work or authorship of assignments." Source: <http://www.evergreen.edu/advising/academichonesty.htm>

Evaluation: Student's course self-eval and eval of faculty are both required for credit as submitted via my.evergreen.edu .

Technology Use & Learning Styles: We all have different ways of learning. Faculty will actively work towards providing information in multiple formats: tactile, auditory, visual, experiential, etc. However, we are limited to means appropriate for the classroom environment. Surfing the internet, checking social media, reading e-mail, playing with cell phones are not an appropriate use of class time. Consult your faculty to discuss technology use and learning style options.

Guest policy: Guests are welcome to visit our learning community during class time and seminar meetings with approval from course faculty in advance of each requested visit. It is the host student's responsibility to contact the faculty with details about the requested guest visit and await approval. Prospective students may visit one class meeting of first-year Core without advance faculty approval, but must notify faculty that they are present prior to the beginning of class. All guests must abide by all social contract, conduct code, and nondiscrimination policy guidelines as aforementioned in this handbook. Per faculty discretion, guests may be asked to leave and not permitted to return to class if these guidelines are violated in any way including behavior that disrupts the learning community. All guests are expected to minimize their participation in class and seminar discussions.

Inclement Weather: In the event of bad weather or emergencies students should check with for announcements of campus closures. Students can call the main campus line 360-867-6000 to get the latest news regarding a campus closure or delay. Faculty may decide to still hold class virtually or may cancel a class meeting even if campus is open and we will send an all-class email prior to the start of class. Students are responsible for checking email and ensuring viable online access options are available to them.

Communicating: Email and Canvas are our primary means of communication. Students are responsible for checking their Evergreen email and Canvas regularly.

Use of Student Work Posted to Canvas: Students post their work to an online learning platform known as "Canvas". Our class Canvas site is accessible to faculty and students registered for this course only. The work students post on Canvas is their private intellectual property and may

not be used or distributed without their expressed consent. Some work may also be owned by governments, organizations, or communities. Their informed and voluntary consent would also need to be obtained for use and appropriate cultural protocols would also need to be followed.

Audio or Video Recording: No audio or video recording may occur during class without the informed and voluntary consent of the students and faculty involved.

Tribal Acknowledgement for both Olympia and Tacoma locations of The Evergreen State

College: The Squaxin Island Tribe's habitation of the land on and around the inlets of the Southern Salish Sea, including what is now the City of Olympia and here at The Evergreen State College spans thousands of years. The ancestral families who lived and thrived here: They named Budd Inlet Steh-Chass, and they named Eld Inlet where the campus is located Squi'Aitle. Today, the Squaxin Island Tribe continues to live on and steward the lands and waters of the Southern Salish Sea. We acknowledge the Squaxin Island Tribe as it continues to live on and steward these lands and waters.

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional homelands of the Puyallup Tribe. The Puyallup people have lived on and stewarded these lands since the beginning of time, and continue to do so today. We recognize that this acknowledgement is one small step toward true allyship and we commit to uplifting the voices, experiences and histories of the Indigenous people of this land and beyond.

We respect and acknowledge the Squaxin Island and Puyallup Tribes, and other Tribes across the Americas, and their many contributions to The Evergreen State College (in support of education, Tribal sovereignty, environmental stewardship). This acknowledgement is one small step toward respect and collaboration with the aim of uplifting the voices, cultures and histories of the Tribes of these lands and waters.

Multiculturalism & Diversity: Faculty and students will actively work towards contextually weaving multiculturalism and diversity throughout our learning as related to readings, lectures, seminar, and group projects. In a learning community students and faculty share the responsibility for the teaching and learning environment. Multiculturalism and diversity is to be understood as aiming to promote constructive community discourse about issues of culture, power, and differences.

Conduct & Conflict Resolution: Please refer to the [MPA Student Handbook](#) .

Discuss any problems involving others in the learning community directly with the individuals involved (so long as the concerned party feels safe doing so). Possessing respect for others is fundamental to an open, free, and educational dialogue. All students are expected to support and contribute to a well-functioning MPA classroom and learning community. Behavior that disrupts the learning community may be grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the MPA program. All students will be held accountable for maintaining the highest of academic standards.

We will abide by the **social contract** : WAC 174-121-010 College philosophy.

We will abide by the **student conduct code (including academic integrity and plagiarism)**:

Chapter 174-123 WAC, Student Conduct Code & Grievance/Appeals

Process: <https://www.evergreen.edu/offices-services/academic-affairs/student-conduct-code>.

We will abide by the **non-discrimination policies and procedures at TESC**

Additional Campus Resources

- [Academic and Career Advising](#)
- [Academic honesty](#)
- [Access Services for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Alcohol/drug use](#)
- [All Official College Policies](#)
- [Assistive Technology \(AT\) Lab](#)
- [Basic Needs Resources](#)
- [BLISS \(BIPOC & LGBTQ+ Intersectional Support Services\)](#)
- [Code of student rights and responsibilities](#)
- [COVID-19](#)
- [Conflict Resolution](#)
- [Counseling Services](#)
- [Evergreen's Social Contract](#)
- [Free Speech Guide](#)
- [Library](#)
- [Media Loan](#)
- [MPA Student Resources](#)
- [Non-discrimination policy](#)
- [QuaSR: Quantitative & Symbolic Reasoning Center](#)
- [Sexual Misconduct reporting and resources](#)
- [Student Activities](#)
- [Student Employment](#)
- [Student Engagement, Equity, and Support](#)
- [Student Wellness Services](#)
- [The Writing Center](#)

